

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 198386 TOSEC 200284

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT JIDDA 5533 ACTION SECSTATE 10 AUG 1976

QUOTE S E C R E T JIDDA 5533

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, MASS, SA, US
SUBJECT: SAUDI ARMS PURCHASES

REF: (A) JIDDA 5459, (B) STATE 192020, (C) JIDDA 5327,
(D) STATE 190466, (E) STATE 190450, (F) STATE 196842

1. PRINCE SAUD COMMENTED ON QUESTION OF SIDEWINDERS TO ME
YESTERDAY IN THE LIGHT OF SECRETARY'S ASSURANCES (REFS B AND E)
WHICH I HAD GIVEN UNDER SECRETARY MANSOURI AUGUST 4 TO PASS TO MINDEF
SULTAN TO THE EFFECT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS EVERY
INTENTION OF FULFILLING THE TRANSACTION FOR TWO THOUSAND MISSILES.

2. PRINCE SAUD MADE RATHER LENGTHY STATEMENT IN WHICH HE
EXPRESSED REGRET ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF ELEMENTS IN THE UNITED

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STATES WHO WISHED TO PREVENT SAUDI ARABIA FROM RECEIVING

EQUIPMENT NECESSARY FOR HER DEFENSE. SAUDI ARABIA REPRESENTS A THREAT TO NO ONE. SHE IS NOT INTERESTED IN ACQUIRING MILITARY EQUIPMENT MERELY TO POSSESS IT. SHE MUST PROVIDE FOR HER DEFENSE AND THAT OF NEARBY COUNTRIES WHO NEED THE SAME KIND OF ASSISTANCE, AND THAT IS ALL SHE IS DOING. SAUDI ARABIA IS ENDEAVORING TO LEAD THE ARAB STATES TOWARD PROCURING THEIR SUPPLIES FROM WESTERN SOURCES. HERE HE CITED THE CASE OF THE AIR DEFENSE MISSILE SYSTEM FOR JORDAN.

3. IN CONNECTION WITH RECENT PUBLIC COMMENT IN THE UNITED STATES CONCERNING POSSIBLE PURCHASE BY SAG OF F-14 AND F-15 AIRCRAFT, THE MINISTER RECALLED THAT WHEN THE SECRETARY WAS IN TAIF IN SEPTEMBER OF LAST YEAR HE HAD ASSURED KING KHALID AND PRINCE FAHD THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD ENSURE THAT SAUDI ARABIAN DEFENSE NEEDS WOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM THE UNITED STATES. I SAID THE SECRETARY'S ASSURANCES GIVEN TO PRINCE SULTAN THROUGH MANSOURI AUGUST 4 MADE IT CLEAR THAT NOTHING HAD CHANGED IN THAT RESPECT. I WAS ALSO IN A POSITION TO PRESENT HIM WITH THE TEXT OF MR. CLEMENTS' STATEMENTS ON F-14'S AND 15'S WHICH WAS A REASONED STATEMENT IN NO WAY INIMICAL TO SAUDI DEFENSE INTERESTS. I HANDED HIM RESUME, ADDING THAT PRESS MATERIAL ARRIVING IN SAUDI ARABIA WAS OFTEN THIRDDHAND AND THAT DISTORTIONS HAD CREPT IN. SAUD AGREED MR. CLEMENTS IS A GOOD FRIEND OF SAUDI ARABIA AND WOULD CERTAINLY NOT SAY OR IMPLY ANYTHING DAMAGING TO OUR RELATIONSHIP. HE SAID MATTER NEEDED NO FURTHER DISCUSSION.

4. WITH REGARD TO OUR INTENTION TO APPROACH CONGRESS ON THE SIDEWINDERS BY SUBMITTING LOA FOR ONE THOUSAND MISSILES NOW AND FOR ONE THOUSAND AFTER THE ELECTION, HE SHOWED SOME UNEASINESS LEST THE SECOND HALF OF THE ORDER ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTIES LATER ON. I INFORMED HIM WE HAD CAREFULLY STUDIED THE SITUATION AND HAD MADE THE JUDGMENT THAT THIS WAS THE BEST WAY TO GO ABOUT IT, ADDING THE PERSONAL COMMENT THAT WITH SOME OF THE ORDER HAVING ALREADY BEEN DELIVERED IT WAS UNLIKELY TO BE INTERRUPTED LATER, AND THAT IN ANY CASE I WOULD URGE HIM TO RELY ON OUR JUDGMENT WHICH I HAD PASSED TO PRINCE SULTAN (REFS B AND E). HE ACCEPTED THIS AND HE DOES NOT EXPECT TO HAVE ADDITIONAL COMMENT ON THE MATTER. THEREFORE, I BELIEVE (AND MANSOURI CONFIRMS) YOU SHOULD CONSIDER THIS EXCHANGE WITH SAUDI AS EXPRESSION OF HIS VIEWS AS REQUESTED IN REFS B AND E

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AND THAT THERE IS NO SAUDI OBJECTION TO OUR PROCEEDING ALONG LINES MENTIONED. PORTER UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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